

REMARKS

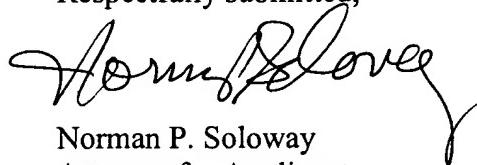
Claims 2 and 7-9 have been amended to address the 112 rejection. No new matter has been entered.

Turning to the art rejections, claims 2, 4 and 6-9 have been rejected as being obvious from Applicant's prior art (APA) in view of the newly cited U.S. Patent to Niiya et al., and claim 3 has been rejected as obvious from the APA in view of Niiya et al. and further in view of Hiraichi et al. The Niiya et al. U.S. patent issued after the filing date of the subject application, based on a U.S. application filed December 21, 2000 which is after the filing date of Applicant's underlying Japanese application 142491/2000, filed May 15, 2000 from which priority is claimed. As certified copy of Applicant's underlying Japanese application was filed with the initial filing. A Verified English Translation of Applicant's underlying Japanese application follows under separate letter. With the filing of the Verified English Translation, Applicant's priority claim will be perfected, and the Niiya et al. U.S. patent removed as citable prior art, thus rendering moot the art rejections.

Having dealt with all the objections raised by the Examiner, the application is believed to be in order for allowance. Early and favorable action are respectfully requested.

In the event there are any fee deficiencies or additional fees are payable, please charge them (or credit any overpayment) to our Deposit Account Number 08-1391.

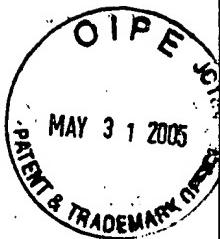
Respectfully submitted,



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Docket No. NEC 142491
Amendment E

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class mail in an envelope addressed to "Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450" on May 25, 2005 at Tucson, Arizona.

By: Kim Hood

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